

Available for teaching from September 2008

Cambridge Pre-U aims to equip students with the skills they need to make a success of their studies at university.

It focuses on:

- a solid and coherent grounding in specialist subjects at an appropriate level
- the ability to undertake independent and self-directed learning
- the ability to think laterally, critically and creatively.

Cambridge Pre-U Subject Syllabuses

- Art and Design
- Biology
- Business & Management
- Chemistry
- Classical Greek
- Classical Heritage
- Comparative Government and Politics
- Economics
- Literature in English
- French (Principal and Short Course)
- Further Mathematics
- German (Principal and Short Course)
- Geography
- Global Perspectives and Independent Research
- History
- History of Art
- Italian (Principal and Short Course)
- Latin
- Mandarin Chinese (Principal and Short Course)
- Mathematics
- Music
- Philosophy & Theology
- Physics
- Psychology
- Russian (Principal and Short Course)
- Spanish (Principal and Short Course)
- Sports Science



The Diploma structure

Candidates qualify for the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma if they pass:

- 3 Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects*
- Global Perspectives
- Independent Research Report

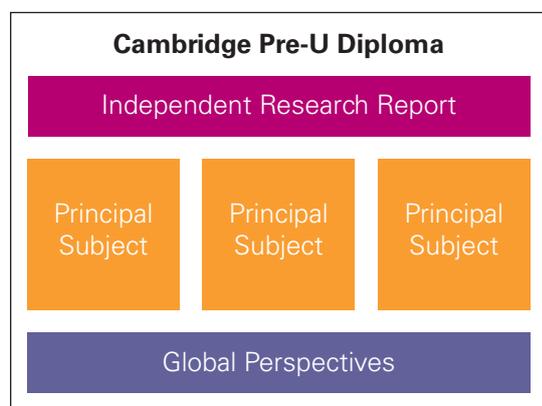
* up to two A Levels may be substituted

The Cambridge Pre-U Diploma constitutes evidence that a candidate has specialised in at least three subjects, has shown the ability to research and communicate in depth in a chosen subject, and has shown skills of critical thinking, reflection and empathy with regard to key contemporary issues and debates.

Principal Subjects: in-depth subject specialism

- Cambridge Pre-U allows students to choose any combination of subjects to suit their interests, enthusiasms and expertise.
- There is no upper limit on the number of Principal Subjects candidates may take. Only three are included in the Diploma award but all subjects receive a separate grade so students will receive credit for the full extent of their academic programmes.
- Other qualifications may be credited within the Diploma, where tariff values can establish a clear equivalence. For instance, a candidate may substitute up to two A Levels in place of Principal Subjects.

The Principal Subject courses are two years long and all Principal Subject examinations take place at the end of the course.



Grading

Each Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subject is a qualification in its own right and receives its own grade. These grades are reported on a separate certificate to the Diploma itself. The grades, in descending order, are D1 (Distinction 1), D2, D3, M1 (Merit 1), M2, M3, P1 (Pass 1), P2, P3.

The Diploma itself is awarded a numerical score based on an aggregation of the results from the individual components.

Common core components: coherence, breadth and depth

Global Perspectives guarantees breadth of study. It is an opportunity to explore a range of key challenges facing young people, wherever they live or work. Global Perspectives will help to develop critical thinking and research skills that are valued in higher education.

The **Independent Research Report** gives a student the chance to dig deeper into a particular subject, or to cross boundaries by doing interdisciplinary work, or to make a new departure by investigating a subject not covered by traditional school syllabuses.

Global Perspectives and Independent Research are intended to be taught as successive one-year courses, with the Independent Research Report growing out of the skills introduced and developed as part of the Global Perspectives course.

GPR as a standalone package

The two 'core components' of the Cambridge Pre-U Diploma, Global Perspectives and Independent Research, are available as a unified package, and can be certificated as a standalone qualification, separate from the Diploma, and equivalent to a full A Level.

Global Perspectives

Today's students live in a rapidly changing world, confronted by a multiplicity of competing ideas, arguments and information. They need to be able to deal with information and ideas critically and constructively if they are to be successful.

Global Perspectives encourages the ability to follow and deconstruct arguments and assertions, to separate fact from opinion, and to assess and evaluate the truth of claims. Related skills involve knowing where to look for information, how to construct arguments, and how to assemble and handle evidence.

This seminar-based course takes key themes of global relevance that are of interest to young people, and encourages students to explore them in an open, critical, disciplined way. Schools will build their own programme by choosing topics from the different thematic groups.

Themes and topics

Ethics	Genetic Engineering, Medical ethics and priorities, Standards of living vs quality of life, ethical foreign policies, Religious-secular divide
Economics	Globalisation of economic activity, Migration and work, Impact of the internet, Global trade, Ethics and economics of food, Economic role of women
Environment	Science and politics of climate change, Industry and pollution, Biodiversity, Challenge of genetic modification, Urbanisation and the countryside
Technology	Alternatives to oil, Artificial intelligence, Futures, Technology and intelligent buildings, Online and interactive communities
Politics and culture	China as an emerging superpower, Endangered cultures, International law, Supra-national organisations (UN, etc), New nationalisms, Integration and multiculturalism

Students are encouraged to explore each chosen topic by following the critical path below.

Global Perspectives: the critical path

Deconstruction	Detailed analysis of a point of view
Reconstruction	Identification and evaluation of evidence for and against competing points of view
Reflection	How have the student's own views been affected by the enquiry?
Presentation	An opportunity to address an issue holistically and in detail

Assessment Objectives

A01	Critical analysis and evaluation of a particular perspective
A02	Critical analysis and interpretation of the context of an argument
A03	Presentation, communication and collaboration
A04	Dispositions: judgement, reason, self-reflection, empathy

Assessment

Component	Task	Assessment	Weighting
O1	Deconstruction	Written Paper 1 h 30 m	25%
O2	Reconstruction and Reflection	Externally assessed 1500 word essay	30%
O3	Presentation	Multi-media presentation based on pre-release material (max15 mins). Externally assessed	45%

The Independent Research Report

Universities put great value on a student's ability to engage in independent research because it demonstrates the direct skills of collecting, handling and evaluating information of various kinds, and also wider study skills involving planning, time-management, prioritisation, self-motivation, sustained concentration and communication.

The Independent Research Report focuses on the ability to design, plan and manage a research project; to collect and analyse information; to evaluate and make reasoned judgements; and to communicate findings and conclusions. Thus the student moves to Higher Education with study skills, enhanced subject knowledge and a more general self-discipline in independent self-directed study.

Assessment Objectives

A01	Design, plan, manage and conduct own research project.
A02	Select, assess and synthesise information, concepts, arguments and evidence.
A03	Evaluate alternative perspectives and interpretations and make independent reasoned judgements.
A04	Communicate clearly research, interpretations and judgements.
A05	Intellectual engagement with the subject matter of the research.

Assessment

Candidates submit a single report of 4,500 - 5,000 words. The precise nature and format of the report, and the research and reporting conventions adopted, will depend on the subject of the enquiry. The subject is chosen by the candidate in consultation with a tutor.

The Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects

With a broad and balanced portfolio of GCSE/IGCSE qualifications the student has earned the right to specialise and can choose the most appropriate from among the suite of 26 Principal Subjects, each offering an excellent platform for further study.

Support and Resources

CIE offers a programme of Cambridge Pre-U INSET training for teachers accompanied by support materials on a dedicated Cambridge Pre-U website.

Full syllabus details and registration for the Cambridge Pre-U online community are at www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu

Specimen assessment materials are available from: international@cie.org.uk